FEDERAL CITY PERFORMING ARTS ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
May 21, 1994
New York Avenue Presbyterian Church

MINUTES

Directors: Present: Boykin, Brayton, Dorr, Fiorito, Gerard, Smith, Streit, Wheeler, Ziskind
Absent: Madigan and Wolfe (no proxies assigned)

Staff: Holloway, McClelland

Candidates: Dwight de Keyser, Michael Greenwald, Alan Savada, and Marvin Weeks

The meeting began at 1:55 P.M.

REVIEW OF APRIL 20, 1994 MINUTES

The minutes for April 20, 1994, were corrected as follows:

In the first full paragraph on page six, the middle sentence and the next full sentence are deleted. One spelling error was corrected.

Motion to approve minutes as amended: Brayton. Second: Dorr. Unanimously approved.

During the budget session, The Board considered whether to hold the Spring '95 concert at Lisner Auditorium or Lincoln Theatre.

According to Holloway, the point of the Spring '95 concert is to feature African-American music in spirituals and vocal jazz. He proposes as guest artists, New Art 6. Holloway believes that Lincoln is ideal for this concert. He is using the Lincoln as a bargaining chip to keep New Art 6's fee to $5,000 rather than the $8,000 they are requesting. The bargaining chip is that the Lincoln is considered the premier theatre on the African-American theatre circuit.

Brayton voiced serious reservations about holding two-thirds of our 94-95 concert season in a house where we have never played before.

McClelland suggested that we hold one concert at Lincoln, see how it goes, and if it goes well, add a second concert there during the 95-96 concert season.

Holloway reasoned that Lincoln Theatre is a plus artistically. Furthermore, the calendar at Lincoln is wide open. He noted that the Lincoln Foundation operates the theatre and pays rent to D.C. for use of the theatre. The Foundation is committed to running the

theatre as a business enterprise so Holloway believes that the Lincoln Theatre will be a viable enterprise for a long time.

Dorr stated that our advertising and marketing has focused on a gay, white male audience. He cautioned that we now face a new challenge in appealing to an African-American audience as well as coping with additional program-driven challenges.

Holloway noted that on a Friday night, the restaurants located one block from the Lincoln Theatre are full of white faces. The area attracts a mixed/young/trendy scene. He believes the area already fits the concept of the Spring '95 program.

Holloway expressed his vision that the season brochure would lay out the seating chart at the Lincoln Theatre.

McClelland reminded the Board that the '94 Holiday concert will either break even or lose money, unlike previous Holiday concerts where GMCW made enough money to drive the rest of its concert season.

Weeks stated that the '95 Spring program of African-American music will sell better at the Lincoln Theatre. de Keyser sees the proposed Spring '95 program at the Lincoln as an exciting opportunity. He raised the question of parking. Wheeler said that is one of the things that he intends to work on.

Holloway said that marketing efforts can focus on the theatre's prestige, history, and the fact that it is the newest and prettiest in the city. He said that he has seen a lot of his neighbors at the Lincoln Theatre. Furthermore, he noted that there is a gay presence on the Lincoln Foundation's Board. He added that the Lincoln Theatre is not just an African-American theatre, but a theatre that focuses on the minority experience.

Ziskind, who has many reservations about two concerts at the Lincoln in one season, said that all the comments made were valid, but they still do not ease his concerns.

Holloway stated that with a June deadline for issuing our season announcement, we must state our venues.

Gerard suggested that we get the City Paper to feature an article about GMCW at the Lincoln. It would make for good public relations.

Streit asked whether the Spring '95 concert would have to be reprogrammed if it were held at Lisner. We may get good public relations for an appearance at the Lincoln, but lose our tie-in to an established venue. Holloway said the concert did not have to be reprogrammed and noted that the music he proposes we perform is

music that came into popularity when the Lincoln Theatre first opened.

Holloway noted that the sound in Lincoln's balcony is not without flaw and would depend on house amplification, but then Lisner's balcony needs amplification. GMCW is looking for a base home. We can have the same concert every year at Lisner. Moving to the Lincoln Theatre is a long-term investment. He reminded the Board that we want to build up our season subscription base. According to Holloway, establishing consistent venues each year helps with audience building. Turtle Creek Chorale expanded from 300 to 1,800 subscribers in four years. Holloway concluded that it is a logical step to move to Lincoln.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Board dispensed with the financial report having just finished its annual budget review.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Streit announced that GMCW will be unable to perform at Black/Lesbian Gay Pride. However, we will have a booth where we will sell raffle tickets, promote our Pride concert, and distribute order forms for our CD.

We will also have a booth at the Gay Pride Festival where we will sell raffle tickets, promote the Pride concert, and sell our CD. In addition, we will have a booth at Montgomery County's Lesbi/Gay Festival on June 11, where we will sell and promote the aforesaid items. This is our chance to make inroads into a suburban audience. We will not be singing at any of these events.

Because there is a rehearsal the evening of Gay Pride, we will only march in the Pride parade and have a booth on the festival grounds. We will not sing as we have traditionally done. Dorr noted that we never are sure anyway when we are supposed to perform at the Pride Festival.

Boykin asked if we have enough volunteers for all these booths. Streit said he is putting out a volunteer sign-up sheet at Sunday's rehearsal.

Streit discussed our policy in regard to giving other gay organizations the right to set up tables at our concerts. This matter arose in connection with our approaching the Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF) about using their phone bank for our phonathon. We have agreed with HRCF to help them in other ways and they have agreed to let us use their phone bank. It was suggested that we would be open to having other gay organizations focus their talks to the Board.

L.A. TRAVEL REPORT

Mike Ziskind delivered the report.

Before he started his report, Ziskind mentioned Mayor Kelly's drop-in attended by some GMCW members. At the drop-in and through other conversations, Ziskind has been advised that we should request maximum amounts for arts grants. He further suggested that GMCW perform some tangible volunteer work for the Max Robinson Clinic. He believes that we must work it into our outreach program.

Ziskind then touched upon our Holiday '94 concert at Lincoln because he went with Wheeler to help negotiate GMCW's contract with Lincoln. Ziskind believes that we should ask the Lincoln Foundation for the same deal that it gave to the D.C. Youth Orchestra, namely two free nights. We should state that our request is in the spirit of the Foundation's stated policy of diversity and that African-American singers will join us for our Spring '95 concert at Lincoln. Ziskind believes the Foundation will respond positively.

Ziskind announced that we can sell our CDs in L.A. and that we do not have to pay a house percentage. It was noted that we will have to explore whether we must pay California sales tax. Wheeler indicated that some support staff members have volunteered to sell CDs in L.A. Streit asked for the volunteers' names.

Ziskind stated that the theatre-bound bus will depart our hotel in L.A. at 11:00 A.M. for a noon rehearsal. Lunch break will be from 2:00 to 3:30 P.M. The first show starts at 4:00 P.M. Ziskind said lunch could be scheduled before we depart for the theatre, but everyone thought that would be too early. According to Ziskind, there are plenty of places to have lunch near the theatre.

Ziskind announced that GMCLA is giving us a party on Saturday night and that our hotel accommodations are quite beautiful and classy.

Ziskind announced that as of May 21, 1994, 62 people are signed up for our airline arrangement; 77 people are signed up for rooms. There has been a recent spate of travel cancellations. Ziskind reminded the Board that if someone cancelled last week, we keep the $40 deposit because GMCW incurs a $40 loss for each cancellation. Ziskind said we will try to back fill the airline seats that have come available because of cancellations. He added that our contract with the airline locks us into paying for a definite number of seats.

Streit asked who is handling rooms? Ziskind said that he was.

Ziskind announced to the Board's astonishment that 139 singers are coming from L.A. Wheeler noted that during a teleconference call he

and Ziskind had with Ron in L.A., Ron said 90 to 110 GMCLA singers were planning to make the trip.

Ziskind announced that Mayor Kelly's calendar has a scheduled drop-in to our Pride concert. It has been made clear to Mayor Kelly that we want no one substituting for her. Ziskind proposes that we present the Mayor with our CD. Holloway clarified that GMCW opens the first set of the Pride concert. Ziskind believes that it will make good theater to present her with the CD and all agree that it can be easily worked into the program. The presentation will take place between the first and second numbers.

Streit expressed his thanks for all of Ziskind's hard work on this project and Ziskind received a deserved round of applause.

REPERTORY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Holloway delivered the report, announcing that we are performing for WAGLIA at the Church of the Pilgrims located at 22nd and P Streets, N.W., in the DuPont Circle area. This will be announced to the Chorus at Sunday's rehearsal. He stated that GMCW is the only Chorus performing and will perform four numbers from its repertoire. He thought the date was Friday, June third, but he will check on the correct date in time for the announcement at rehearsal. He did not know the time but promised to check on that as well.

GMCW expects to have 94 of its singers performing at the Pride concert. When you add GMCLA singers, there will be 233 singers on stage at Lisner Auditorium.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Boykin delivered the report. The Pride after-concert party will be at the DuPont Plaza Hotel located on DuPont Circle. The Hotel has been an advertising supporter. We were not able to finalize arrangements with Bertucci's where we originally planned to hold the party. We expect it to be a nice party. Waiters will serve the food. Boykin noted that Darrell Lewis had worked very hard on this party.

We must have the exact number of people attending for catering purposes. The per-person cost of food is $14. Everyone must wear a name badge at the party. If a badge is not waiting for you, you don't get in.

Boykin discussed the year-end party at the Lyceum in Alexandria, Virginia, and noted how hard Wonneberger and Michael (Baker) had worked on the party.

FUNDRAISING

Fiorito delivered the report and announced that our direct mailing went out on April 25, 1994, by bulk mail. He noted that there is no guarantee on delivery when you use bulk mail, but the post office has 30 days in which to make the delivery.

So far, GMCW has received several donations totaling approximately $500. Fiorito is encouraged by this response.

The phonathon takes place next week. We are using HRCF's headquarters on Tuesday and Wednesday nights.

Fiorito reported that some raffle tickets have been distributed to members for public sale. All GMCW members have a responsibility to sell tickets, which cost a dollar each. Only ten tickets are being given to each member to minimize the individual burden.

On June 11, 1994, the Davids Cooper/Streit will host a deck-warming/fundraising party at their home in Takoma Park, Maryland. This will be announced in next week's Hot Notes. A payment of $10 per person will defray the cost of food and drink.

Fiorito announced that the Flea Market has been postponed to the Fall and that there will be no Murder Mystery Party this fiscal year.

Fiorito is optimistic that the remaining 35 percent on the pie chart toward 100 percent of our fundraising goal will be filled in. Streit noted that we took on a huge goal and that even if GMCW does not achieve its goal, we accomplished things beyond our original dreams.

It was proposed that the Board present Bob Wonneberger, for outstanding work on the CD project, and Larry Cohen, for outstanding work on the Marketing Committee, with letters of appreciation and a small gift for their efforts. It was also suggested that John Perkins, the Capital Club President, receive a letter of appreciation for his work on this year's successful auction and that Richard Dupler receive a letter for his outstanding efforts on the CD project.

Motion to adjourn: Brayton. Second: Boykin. The motion unanimously passed. The meeting adjourned at 2:40 P.M.

Submitted by: **Robert G. Wheeler**
FCPAA Secretary
June 4, 1994